DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 481 320 JC 030 515

AUTHOR	Coperthwaite, Corby A.; Ritchie, William F.
TITLE	An Assessment of Standardized Accuplacer Placement Scores for College English in the Connecticut Community-Technical College System.
INSTITUTION	Connecticut Community Coll. System, Hartford.
PUB DATE	2002-08-13
NOTE	19p.
AVAILABLE FROM	For full text: http://tunxis.commnet.edu/ir/Surveys/CCCS_Basic_Skills_Report.pdf.
PUB TYPE	Numerical/Quantitative Data (110) -- Reports - Research (143)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Academic Standards; *Community Colleges; Educational Testing; School Readiness; *State Standards; *Student Placement; *Student Promotion; Test Use; Two Year Colleges
IDENTIFIERS	*Connecticut Regional Community Colleges

ABSTRACT

This document examines the possible impact of a proposed standardization of placement scores for college English throughout the Connecticut Community College system. The 12 Connecticut community colleges use Accuplacer for placement into college English. Each college, however, uses different placement cut-off scores, and has varying structures of developmental education in place at each school. A recommendation was made to implement a common placement standard across the system. This study assesses what the impact of the proposed standard would have been on new and transfer students enrolled in English Composition and Developmental English during the Fall 2001 term. The sample included 371 English Composition students and 1,188 Developmental English students. Because not all colleges differentiated between new students and new transfer students, the study used both groups in their analysis. Results indicated that the proposed cut scores would not have impacted the cohort of Developmental English students. However, the proposed cut scores would have impacted the placement of English Composition students considerably and suggests, based on limited data, that the proposed cut scores be reconsidered. Finally, the findings and the limitations of the study are discussed. (Contains 11 tables.) (JS)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 481 320

Connecticut Community Colleges

Education That Works For a Lifetime

An Assessment of Standardized Accuplacer Placement Scores for College English in the Connecticut Community-Technical College System

August 13, 2002

Corby A. Coperthwaite, Ph.D.
Director of Planning, Research and Assessment
Board of Trustees
Connecticut Community-Technical College System

William F. Ritchie, Ph.D.
Director of Institutional Research
Tunxis Community College

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

R. A. Williams

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

TC030515

2

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Table of Contents

Table of Contents 2
Abstract 3
An Assessment of Standardized Accuplacer Placement Scores for College English in the Connecticut Community College System 4
Methods 5
Course File 5
Student file 6
Testing File 7
Design and Procedure 7
Sample 8
Definitions 8
Table 1: Population Identification (Fall 2001) 9
Table 2: Budgeted Class Size 10
Table 3: First College Level English Course Enrollments (Fall 2001) 11
Table 4: Developmental English Course Enrollments (Fall 2001) 11
Results 12
English Composition – Student Impact 12
Table 5: End of Term Grades – English Composition 12
Table 6: New Placements 13
Table 7: Detail of "Other" and "Missing" 14
Table 8: New Placements (Grades A through F in English Composition) 14
Developmental English – Student Impact 15
Table 9: End of Term Grades – Developmental English 15
Budgeted Sections/Section Distribution 16
Table 10: Budgeted Sections 16
Table 11: System Summary 17
Discussion 17

Abstract

The 12 Connecticut community colleges use Accuplacer for placement into college English. However, each college uses different placement cut-off scores, and there are varying structures of developmental education in place at each school. Recently, a recommendation was made to implement a common placement standard across the system.

This study examines what the impact of the proposed standard would have been on new and transfer students enrolled in English Composition and Developmental English during the Fall 2001 term. The proposed cut scores would not have impacted the cohort of Developmental English students. However, the proposed cut scores would have impacted the placement of English Composition students considerably and suggests, based on limited data, that the proposed cut scores be reconsidered.

An Assessment of Standardized Accuplacer Placement Scores for College English in the Connecticut Community College System

Basic skills assessment for entering students has become more than an academic policy issue in the Connecticut Community College System. Within the system, each of the 12 colleges uses the Accuplacer for placement into college English; however, each college uses different placement scores, and there are varying structures of developmental education in place at each school. Currently, a student can place into Developmental English at one college in the system and then take those same placement test scores to another Connecticut community college and place into college English. The problem is further complicated when transfer articulation agreements are considered, because college English completers may or may not possess the same proficiency level in the subject.

Recently a recommendation was made to implement a placement standard for college English. The proposed placement scores for college English would require a score of 8 or higher on the Accuplacer Essay, an 83 or higher on Accuplacer Reading Comprehension, and an 86 or higher on Accuplacer Sentence Skills. The purpose of this study is to assess the impact of this recommendation. This study does not address pure learning outcomes; rather it is descriptive and limited to the following research questions:

- How would the proposed placement scores impact students who placed in college English or Developmental English under the current local college norms?
- Do the proposed placement scores result in an increase or decrease in the number of developmental students?
- Do the proposed placement scores result in an increase or decrease in the number of developmental sections?
- What are the implications, if any?

Methods

Course File

Course data come from the Fall 2001 course table (SWRSXCR) that is part of the third week suite of frozen extract files (SWRXF22) in Banner. Before the file could be used, the following file maintenance was performed:

- Courses were selected where fund=General (G), level=Credit (Cr), and Enrollment >0[1].
- Developmental attributes were verified with the colleges.
- All cross-listed courses were rolled so as not to duplicate the section, credit hours, contact hrs, enrollments and the like. This activity was verified with the colleges.
- Section 90 and 90W courses at Quinebaug Valley Community College were rolled into one course record number (CRN). The course was titled "tutorial" with 3 academic hours, 3 billing hours, 3 contact hours, 3 lecture hours, 0 lab hours, limit of 25, and a total enrollment equaling the sum for all sections. Remaining section 90 and 90W records were deleted.
- ENG96A (the dummy section) at Manchester Community College was deleted.
- Obsolete CIP codes were replaced with current and correct items that were selected by the colleges.
- Budget category codes were attached to courses through CIP and attribute.
- Course listings, enrollments and limits were verified by the colleges.
- Student credit hours were calculated (Stu_CrHrs: [Academic_Hrs]*[Enrollment]).
- Student FTE was calculated (SFTE: [STU_CrHrs]/15).
- Missing course limit data was manually entered after the fact.

[1] "Enrollment >0" was used in place of "Status=A" because not all colleges populated the status field.

There are a variety of Developmental English courses throughout the community college system. Some are uniquely writing or reading courses while others combine the two skills within a single course or series of courses. Some colleges consider reading as English and some do not. For the purposes of this study, Developmental English will include mainstream writing and reading courses in Budget Category 3. This includes courses with an associated developmental (Devl) attribute or a 320101 (Basic Skills, General), 320199 (Basic Skills, Other) or 320108 (Reading, Literacy, Communication Skills) CIP code even without an associated Devl attribute. The study excludes English as a Second Language, English for Deaf Studies, Introduction to Thinking, and other courses that some colleges designate as Developmental English. The first college level English course was defined by the colleges and will be referred to as English Composition throughout this paper.

Student file

Student data come from the Fall 2001 student information table (SWRSXST) that is part of the SWRXF22 in Banner. This cohort sample is defined as students entering the community college system in the fall of 2001 who took English Composition or some form of Developmental English during that term. The cohort includes both first-time and new transfer students[2]. New students are the only group for whom initial placement information can be verified[3]; enrollment in these courses should equal placement if student type is coded correctly.

[2] The intent was to focus on new first-time students, but there is one college that coded most of their transfer students as "new" rather than "transfer". Because of this miscode, transfer students must be included.

[3] A returning or transfer student enrolled in English Composition may have initially placed in Developmental English and completed the developmental sequence the previous semester or in some other previous semester. There is no way to know this without a transcript analysis. Final placement data is not always in Banner. There is variation in placement scores and placement instruments across the system.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Testing File

Accuplacer test scores come from the Fall 2001 placement tests table (SWRSXTS) from the SWRXF22 in Banner. Before the file could be used, significant file maintenance was performed. Because the file records one record per placement test session, a student can be in the file numerous times[4]. File manipulation involved creating one record per student that included the most recent Accuplacer test scores. Because the study is predicated on the use of Accuplacer, scores from locally developed and other commercial placement instruments used by some colleges for placement were not considered.

Design and Procedure

Student impact will be assessed in the following manner:

- Identify first-time entering students who placed into English Composition and completed the course with a grade of C or better[5]. Compare placement using the proposed cut scores with placement using local college norms (actual placement). Would any of these students place into Developmental English under the proposed scores?
- Identify first-time entering students who placed into English Composition and completed the course with a grade of C- or lower. Compare placement using the proposed cut scores with placement using local college norms (actual placement). Would any of these students place into Developmental English under the proposed scores?
- Identify first-time entering students who placed into Developmental English and completed the course with a grade of C or better. Compare placement using the proposed cut scores with placement using local college norms (actual placement). Would any of these students place into English Composition under the proposed scores?

[4] In several cases students were listed 128 times.
[5] The grade of C was chosen to reflect transferability.

- Identify first-time entering students who placed into Developmental English and completed the course with a grade of C- or lower. Compare placement using the proposed cut scores with placement using local college norms (actual placement). Would any of these students place into English Composition under the proposed scores?
- Use budgeted class size[6] to compute the number of Developmental English and English Composition sections to accommodate students using current placement scores.
- Use budgeted class size to compute the number of Developmental English and English Composition sections to accommodate students using the proposed placement scores.
- What are the implications for Connecticut's community colleges?

Sample

To be included in the sample a student needed to be a new or transfer student and be enrolled in developmental reading and/or writing or English Composition during the Fall 2001 semester. In addition, the student also needed an Accuplacer Essay, Reading Comprehension and Sentence Skills score recorded in the Fall 2001 suite of frozen extract files. This resulted in a sample of 371 English Composition students and 1,188 Developmental English students (see Table 1).

Definitions

College Size: Colleges in the Community College System are categorized as small, medium and large based upon average FTE generated.

Budgeted Class Size: Budgeted class size is a figure used in the system's funding formula to estimate dollars needed by each college to staff class sections beyond those covered

[6] Class limits vary across the system, and at some colleges the class limits vary among sections of the same course. Because of this, budgeted class size was selected as the standardized unit of comparison.

by full-time, general fund faculty. Budgeted class sizes vary by college size and course type and are displayed in Table 2, while Tables 3 and 4 illustrate the budgeted section allocation by system formulas with actual college sections offered for Fall 2001.

Table 1: Population and Sample Identification (Fall 2001)

College	# of New and Transfer Students Enrolled in Eng Composition	# of New and Transfer Eng Comp Students with all 3 Test Scores
Asnuntuck	171	0
Capital	347	8
Gateway	605	12
Housatonic	554	75
Manchester	580	5
Middlesex	343	8
Naugatuck	536	0
Northwestern	185	93
Norwalk	663	5
Quinebaug	204	31
Three Rivers	494	5
Tunxis	375	129
System Total	**5057**	**371**
College	**# of New and Transfer Students Enrolled in Developmental English**	**# of New and Transfer Devl English Students with all 3 Test Scores**
Asnuntuck	132	0
Capital	421	5
Gateway	659	7
Housatonic	1197	500
Manchester	790	1
Middlesex	299	12
Naugatuck	789	15
Northwestern	276	114
Norwalk	750	107
Quinebaug	238	17
Three Rivers	206	0
Tunxis	807	410
System Total	**6564**	**1188**

Table 2: Budgeted Class Size

College	Size	Allied Health	Business & Marketing	Devl	Humanities	Math & Science	Other Occupational	Social Science	Technology	Uncoded
Asnuntuck	Small	15.00	21.56	18.75	21.56	21.56	21.56	21.56	15.00	21.56
Capital	Medium	15.00	22.81	18.75	22.81	22.81	22.81	22.81	15.00	22.81
Gateway	Medium	15.00	22.81	18.75	22.81	22.81	22.81	22.81	15.00	22.81
Housatonic	Medium	15.00	22.81	18.75	22.81	22.81	22.81	22.81	15.00	22.81
Manchester	Large	15.00	24.06	18.75	24.06	24.06	24.06	24.06	15.00	24.06
Middlesex	Medium	15.00	22.81	18.75	22.81	22.81	22.81	22.81	15.00	22.81
Naugatuck	Large	15.00	24.06	18.75	24.06	24.06	24.06	24.06	15.00	24.06
Northwestern	Small	15.00	21.56	18.75	21.56	21.56	21.56	21.56	15.00	21.56
Norwalk	Large	15.00	24.06	18.75	24.06	24.06	24.06	24.06	15.00	24.06
Quinebaug	Small	15.00	21.56	18.75	21.56	21.56	21.56	21.56	15.00	21.56
Three Rivers	Medium	15.00	22.81	18.75	22.81	22.81	22.81	22.81	15.00	22.81
Tunxis	Medium	15.00	22.81	18.75	22.81	22.81	22.81	22.81	15.00	22.81

Table 3: First College Level English Course Enrollments (Fall 2001)

College	Size	Sections	Enrollment	Limit	Credit Hours	Student FTE	Budgeted Class Size	Estimated Sections	Difference
Asnuntuck	Small	7	171	125	3	34.20	21.56	7.93	0.93
Capital	Medium	15	347	345	3	69.40	22.81	15.21	0.21
Gateway	Medium	23	605	575	3	121.00	22.81	26.52	3.52
Housatonic	Medium	23	554	525	3	110.80	22.81	24.29	1.29
Manchester	Large	25	580	593	3	116.00	24.06	24.11	-0.89
Middlesex	Medium	14	343	350	3	68.60	22.81	15.04	1.04
Naugatuck	Large	24	536	560	3	107.20	24.06	22.28	-1.72
Northwestern	Small	7	185	174	3	37.00	21.56	8.58	1.58
Norwalk	Large	29	663	720	3	132.60	24.06	27.56	-1.44
Quinebaug	Small	9	204	216	3	40.80	21.56	9.46	0.46
Three Rivers	Medium	22	494	523	3	98.80	22.81	21.66	-0.34
Tunxis	Medium	15	375	375	3	75.00	22.81	16.44	1.44
Community College System		213	5057	5081		1011.40		219.07	6.07

Table 4: Developmental English Course Enrollments (Fall 2001)

College	Size	Sections	Enrollment	Limit	Credit Hours	Student FTE	Budgeted Class Size	Estimated Sections	Difference
Asnuntuck	Small	6	132	175	3	26.40	18.75	7.04	1.04
Capital	Medium	23	421	478	3	84.20	18.75	22.45	-0.55
Gateway	Medium	27	659	655	3	131.80	18.75	35.15	8.15
Housatonic	Medium	52	1197	1204	3	239.40	18.75	63.84	11.84
Manchester	Large	38	790	836	3	158.00	18.75	42.13	4.13
Middlesex	Medium	15	299	485	3	59.80	18.75	15.95	0.95
Naugatuck	Large	37	789	806	3	157.80	18.75	42.08	5.08
Northwestern	Small	14	276	260	3	55.20	18.75	14.72	0.72
Norwalk	Large	36	750	752	3	150.00	18.75	40.00	4.00
Quinebaug	Small	12	238	420	3	47.60	18.75	12.69	0.69
Three Rivers	Medium	12	206	247	3	41.20	18.75	10.99	-1.01
Tunxis	Medium	36	807	829	3	161.40	18.75	43.04	7.04
Community College System		308	6564	7147		1312.80		350.08	42.08

Results

English Composition – Student Impact

At the start of the semester 371 (7%) of the 5,057 students enrolled in English Composition met the criteria for inclusion in this study. Table 5 provides a breakdown of the grade and transcript notations of the 371 English Composition students. At the end of the semester, 200 (54%) of these students received a grade of C or higher, 105 (29%) received some other grade or transcript notation, and 66 (17%) students withdrew from their college (see Table 6).

Table 5: End of Term Grades – English Composition

			Valid	Cumulative
	Frequency	Percent	Percent	Percent
A	43	11.59%	14.10%	14.10%
A-	28	7.55%	9.18%	23.28%
B+	34	9.16%	11.15%	34.43%
B	36	9.70%	11.80%	46.23%
B-	27	7.28%	8.85%	55.08%
C+	18	4.85%	5.90%	60.99%
C	14	3.77%	4.59%	65.58%
C-	12	3.23%	3.93%	69.51%
D+	3	0.81%	0.98%	70.49%
D	4	1.08%	1.31%	71.80%
D-	1	0.27%	0.33%	72.13%
F	31	8.36%	10.16%	82.30%
AW	3	0.81%	0.98%	83.28%
I	20	5.39%	6.56%	89.84%
IP	1	0.27%	0.33%	90.17%
M	1	0.27%	0.33%	90.49%
N	1	0.27%	0.33%	90.82%
NC	17	4.58%	5.57%	96.40%
W	10	2.70%	3.28%	99.67%
8 8	1	0.27%	0.33%	100.00%
Missing	66	17.79%		
Total	371			
Valid Total	305			

If the proposed scores had been in place during the fall of 2001, the placements would have changed as shown in Table 6. Of the 200 students who completed English Composition with a grade of C or higher, 135 (68%) would have placed into Developmental English. Of the 105 students who received a grade of C- or lower or some other transcript notation, 73 (70%) would have placed into Developmental English. Of the 66 students who dropped out of their college, 40 (61%) would have placed into Developmental English. In all, of the 371 students in our English Composition sample, 248 (67%) would have placed into Developmental English.

Table 6: New Placements

		New Placement			
	Eng Comp	Eng Comp		Devl Eng	
C or Higher	200	65	33%	135	68%
Other	105	32	30%	73	70%
Missing	66	26	39%	40	61%
Total	371	123	33%	248	67%

Table 7 provides a closer look at the 171 students in the "Other" and "Missing Categories" who would have placed in Developmental English under the proposed placement scores. Of the 51 students who received a C-, D+, D, D- or F in English Composition, 27 (53%) would have placed in Developmental English. Of the 44 students with some other transcript notation besides W, 37 (84%) would have placed in Developmental English. Of the 10 students who withdrew from the course (W grade designation), and not the college, nine (90%) would have placed into Developmental English. Of the 66 students who left their college, 40 (61%) would have placed in Developmental English. In total 113 (66%) of the 171 students in the "other" and "missing" categories may have been more appropriately placed into Developmental English as a result of the proposed placement scores, but there is no way of knowing for certain if the new placement would have been more accurate or if the student would have been any more successful.

Table 7: Detail of "Other" and "Missing"

	Eng Comp	Devl Eng	Percent
C-	12	6	50.00%
D+	3	3	100.00%
D	4	2	50.00%
D-	1	0	0.00%
F	31	16	51.61%
AW	3	3	100.00%
I	20	13	65.00%
IP	1	1	100.00%
M	1	1	100.00%
N	1	1	100.00%
NC	17	17	100.00%
W	10	9	90.00%
8 8	1	1	100.00%
Missing	66	40	60.61%

If only standard letter grades of A through F are considered, 135 (68%) of the 200 students passing English Composition with a grade of C or higher would have placed in Developmental English if the proposed placement scores had been used. Twenty-seven (53%) of the 51 students receiving a standard letter grade of C- through F would have placed into Developmental English (see Table 8).

Table 8: New Placements (Grades A through F in English Composition)

		New Placement			
	Eng Comp	Eng Comp		Devl Eng	
C or Higher	200	65	33%	135	68%
C- through F	51	24	47%	27	53%

Acknowledging known limitations of using grades as an outcome measure, the data indicate that 135 (54%) of the 251 English Composition students would have been delayed and 27 (10%) may have been more appropriately placed if the proposed placement scores had been applied.

Developmental English – Student Impact

At the start of the semester 1,188 (18%) of 6,564 Developmental English students met the criteria for inclusion in this study. At the end of the semester, 703 (59%) of these students received a grade of C or higher and 384 (32%) received a grade of C- or lower or some other transcript notation, while 101 (9%) students withdrew from their college[7] (see Table 9).

Table 9: End of Term Grades – Developmental English[8]

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
A	91	7.66%	8.37%	9.15%
AO	2	0.17%	0.18%	9.33%
A-	78	6.57%	7.18%	16.51%
B+	91	7.66%	8.37%	24.88%
B	131	11.03%	12.05%	36.93%
BO	2	0.17%	0.18%	37.12%
B-	112	9.43%	10.30%	47.42%
C+	80	6.73%	7.36%	54.78%
C	115	9.68%	10.58%	65.36%
CO	1	0.08%	0.09%	65.45%
C-	61	5.13%	5.61%	71.06%
D+	11	0.93%	1.01%	72.08%
D	22	1.85%	2.02%	74.10%
D-	13	1.09%	1.20%	75.30%
F	91	7.66%	8.37%	83.67%
F*	5	0.46%	0.46%	84.13%
I	16	1.35%	1.47%	85.60%
IP	19	1.60%	1.75%	87.35%
M	32	2.69%	2.94%	90.29%
NA	13	1.09%	1.20%	91.49%
NC	72	6.06%	6.62%	98.11%
NS	3	0.25%	0.28%	98.39%
S	5	0.42%	0.46%	98.85%
U	1	0.08%	0.09%	98.94%
W	17	1.43%	1.56%	100.50%
X	3	0.25%	0.28%	100.78%
Missing	101	8.50%		
Total	1188			
Valid Total	1087			

[7] "Missing" means withdrawal from a college while "W" indicates withdrawal from a course.
[8] Percents do not sum to 100 due to rounding errors.

If the proposed Accuplacer scores had been in place during the fall of 2001, all of the Developmental English placements would have remained the same. Because there is no change in placement, there is also no change in class section distribution.

Budgeted Sections/Section Distribution

There were 213 English Composition sections offered in Fall 2001, representing 4% of all general fund sections (see Table 3 on p.11). Dividing enrollment by budgeted class size, results in an estimated 219 sections, six sections more than the colleges ran. There were 308 Developmental English sections offered in Fall 2001, which represents 6% of all general fund sections (see Table 4 on p. 11). Dividing enrollment by budgeted class size results in an estimated 350 sections, 42 sections more than the colleges ran. As shown in Table 10, the sample of 371 English Composition students accounted for 16.56 budgeted sections of English Composition based on the budgeted class size for humanities classes. Had the proposed placement scores been used, these same students would have accounted for 5.46 budgeted English Composition sections and 13.23 budgeted Developmental English sections.

Table 10: Budgeted Sections

		Humanities	Developmental	Actual Placement (Eng Comp)		New Placements (Eng Comp)		New Placement (Devl Eng)	
	College Size	Budgeted Class Size	Budgeted Class Size	Enrollment	Budgeted Sections	Enrollment	Budgeted Sections	Enrollment	Budgeted Sections
Asnuntuck	Small	21.56	18.75	0	-	0	0.00	0	0.00
Capital	Medium	22.81	18.75	8	0.35	0	0.00	8	0.43
Gateway	Medium	22.81	18.75	12	0.53	4	0.18	8	0.43
Housatonic	Medium	22.81	18.75	75	3.29	0	0.00	75	4.00
Manchester	Large	24.06	18.75	5	0.21	1	0.04	4	0.21
Middlesex	Medium	22.81	18.75	8	0.35	0	0.00	8	0.43
Naugatuck	Large	24.06	18.75	0	-	0	0.00	0	0.00
Northwestern	Small	21.56	18.75	93	4.31	16	0.74	77	4.11
Norwalk	Large	24.06	18.75	5	0.21	0	0.00	5	0.27
Quinebaug	Small	21.56	18.75	31	1.44	10	0.46	21	1.12
Three Rivers	Medium	22.81	18.75	5	0.22	2	0.09	3	0.16
Tunxis	Medium	22.81	18.75	129	5.66	90	3.95	39	2.08
System				371	16.56	123	5.46	248	13.23

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Using the proposed scores to accommodate the initial cohort of English Composition students would have required an additional 2.13 budgeted class sections. This represents a 13% increase over the initial budgeted sections allocation.

Table 11 provides a system summary of the impact of using the proposed placement scores. The 371 English Composition students accounted for 16.56 budgeted English Composition sections. The 1,188 Developmental English students accounted for 63.36 budgeted Developmental English sections. The proposed cut scores would have no impact on the initial cohort of Developmental English students, but the distribution of the English Composition students shifted considerably. This shift would result in 123 students representing 5.46 budgeted English Composition sections and 1,436 students representing 76.59 Developmental English sections. For this sample, there is a 2.6% increase in the number of sections that would have to be offered to accommodate the same number of students under the proposed scores (82.05 proposed versus 79.92 actual).

Table 11: System Summary

Actual				With Proposed Placement Scores			
Eng Comp		Devl Eng		Eng Comp		Devl Eng	
Enrollment	Sections	Enrollment	Sections	Enrollment	Sections	Enrollment	Sections
371	16.56	1188	63.36	123	5.46	1436	76.59

Discussion

The results of this study show that a large number of successful English Composition completers would have placed into Developmental English using the proposed placement scores. One medium sized college, for example, had 75 students in the English Composition cohort. Under the proposed Accuplacer scores, all 75 would have placed into Developmental English, including 46 (61%) students who received a grade of C or higher in English Composition. Among the 200 successful English Composition completers, 135 would have placed into Developmental English. In other words 68% of the successful completers (grade C

or higher) would have had to complete at least one Developmental English course and an English Composition course in order to attain the same outcome.

A total of 171 English Composition students received a grade of C- or lower, some other transcript notation, or withdrew from their college. One hundred thirteen of these students would have placed into Developmental English, but there is no way of knowing for certain if the new placement would have been more accurate or if students would have been any more successful.

Regarding budgeted sections, the proposed scores would result in a reduction in English Composition enrollment by 248 students and a reduction of 11.10 budgeted English Composition sections while there would be a concomitant increase in Developmental English enrollment by 248 students and an increase of 13.23 budgeted Developmental English sections. The additional 2.13 sections is a 2.6% increase in the number of sections needed to accommodate the same number of students. This is a direct result of the budgeted class size difference between Developmental English and English Composition.

Can we generalize our findings back to the population to ascertain the overall impact to the system? The answer is no. Our sample is not random. The likelihood for selection based on the established criteria varies by college, and many students taking the Accuplacer are not taking all three English tests and/or their scores are not being entered into Banner at the same rate.

This study also illustrates that the condition and availability of data in Banner for in-depth analysis is not currently in place. One step towards improving the current situation is to put in place a common, standardized system-wide set of Accuplacer scores for placement into English Composition. However, the limited data available suggest that the currently proposed scores be reconsidered.

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
National Library of Education (NLE)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)

NOTICE

Reproduction Basis

[X] This document is covered by a signed "Reproduction Release (Blanket)" form (on file within the ERIC system), encompassing all or classes of documents from its source organization and, therefore, does not require a "Specific Document" Release form.

[ ] This document is Federally-funded, or carries its own permission to reproduce, or is otherwise in the public domain and, therefore, may be reproduced by ERIC without a signed Reproduction Release form (either "Specific Document" or "Blanket").